



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

February 14, 2020

TO: Agricultural Advisory Committee Members (AAC)

FROM: Jeremy V. Criss, Director
Office of Agriculture

SUBJECT: February 18, 2020 Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet on Tuesday **February 18, 2020 at 7:00 pm.**

We will be meeting at the Up County Regional Services Center 12900 Middlebrook Road Germantown MD 20874 Room D on the Third floor.

The agenda is on the next page.

The draft minutes from the January 21, 2020 AAC meeting will be available prior to the meeting.

The other attachments for our meeting will be posted on the Office of Agriculture web site. I will bring copies of the minutes, agenda, and other attachments.

<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/AgServices/agboardscommittee.html>

I hope to see you on Tuesday.

*Sign language interpreter services will be provided only upon request with notice as far in advance as possible but no less than 72 hours prior to the event. If you need other services or Aids to participate in this activity, please call 301-590-2810.



**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting
February 18, 2020 Agenda**

1. Call the Meeting to Order and Introductions:
 2. Approval of the AAC meeting minutes from January 21, 2020.
 3. The Agritourism Study Advisory Committee-ASAC Study and Final report was presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board on December 19, 2019 and the County Council on January 31, 2020. We will see what the County Council wants to do on this report and recommendations.
 4. The Office of Agriculture has been working on State Legislation including hearings with the Montgomery County Delegation Land Use Transportation and Environment Committee.
 5. <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/bills/hb/hb0848F.pdf>- HB 848- proposal to change the County ag transfer tax law, would direct the collections to be used for ag preservation and programs that support agriculture.
<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/bills/hb/hb0805F.pdf>- HB 805- Adding Montgomery County to the 50 and under club for ag tourism venue capacity. The Montgomery County House Delegation approved HB 805 with an amendment that will enable Montgomery County farmers to use agricultural buildings for agritourism for occupancies that do not exceed 100 people.
<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/bills/hb/hb0827F.pdf>- HB 827 - proposal to add rifles as acceptable firearms in Montgomery County while hunting with a deer management permit. Please note that several farmers have expressed safety concerns surrounding the use of rifles in the County. The HB 827 has been assigned to summer study.
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6. The County Council introduced ZTA 20-01 to allow Community Solar in the Agricultural Reserve-The ZTA proposes a total of 1,800 acres or just 2% of the Agricultural Reserve-AR zone should be allowed for larger Solar installations. The ZTA 20-01 was introduced on January 21, 2020 and the public hearing has been moved to March 3, 2020. The MCFB, MAP, and APAB are all opposed to the Solar ZTA 20-01.
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/zta/2020/ZTA%2020-01.pdf>
 7. Ag Reserve Postcard Survey: All residents in the Agricultural Reserve have received a postcard survey pertaining to high speed Broadband. We have received very good responses to this postcard. If you still have your postcard, please make sure that you fill it out and send it back in. There was a News 4 episode on Rural Broad Band that the Jamison's were featured. <https://www.nbcwashington.com/investigations/digital-divide-nearly-1-million-in-va-md-have-no-high-speed-internet-access/2211920/>

8. The County Council introduced ZTA 20-02 Accessory Structures-Agricultural Reserve Standards. The Public Hearing is scheduled for March 3, 2020. The ZTA 20-02 states the footprint of non-agricultural accessory buildings or structures applies to 50% all buildings and structures combined. The ZTA states that buildings for an agricultural use are exempt from the size restriction. However, Section 59.3.2.6.F limits the size of accessory structures used for Agritourism to 10% of the total footprint of all buildings and structures on the farm.
9. The County Office of Agriculture was awarded a Rural Legacy Program-RLP Grant of \$2,704,500 on January 8, 2020. A Supplemental Appropriation has been introduced and the Public Hearing is scheduled for February 25, 2020. The OAG has also received confirmation from the Crown Farm Developers that the final payment totaling \$500,000 to the OAG will be remitted this month for the final plats and units that have been approved by the City of Gaithersburg. The OAG will be submitting another RLP Grant on February 11, 2020. Social Media has resulted in many farmers interested in farmland preservation.
10. Supplemental Appropriation for Davis Mill Road Improvements that will impact Butlers Orchard. This item was scheduled for the February 6, 2020 T&E Committee Work Session. The packet describes Butler's Orchard and its customers as the people who are directly affected by this. They also expect the work to take 6 months to complete.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2020/202006/20200206_TE_AG.pdf

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2020/202006/20200206_TE2.pdf
11. This year marks the 40th Anniversary of the Agricultural Reserve. We need to begin planning for an event to celebrate this milestone with all stakeholders.

Next meeting of the AAC-March 17, 2020 at 7:00 pm in Room D-Third Floor.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-February 18, 2020
MCPS Nutrition Facility tour with farmers-February 19, 2020
Winter Agronomy Update-February 20, 2020
Annual Farmers Market Training-February 24, 2020
Farmer Forum-February 25, 2020
MSCD Pasture Walk Workshop-February 28, 2020
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- March 3, 2020
Annual Montgomery Weed Control Board of Directors Meeting-March 9, 2020
Montgomery County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-March 10, 2020
Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-March 13, 2020
National Agriculture Day with the County Council-March 24, 2020